

**NUMBER ONE THOUSAND—OR,
“BREAD ENOUGH AND TO SPARE”
NO. 1000**

**A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD’S-DAY MORNING, JULY 16, 1871,
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

*“And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father’s
have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!”
Luke 15:17.*

“HE came to himself.” The word may be applied to one waking out of a deep swoon. He had been unconscious of his true condition, and he had lost all power to deliver himself from it; but now he was coming round again, returning to consciousness and action. The voice which shall awaken the dead awakened him; the visions of his sinful trance all disappeared; his foul but fascinating dreams were gone; he came to himself. Or the word may be applied to one recovering from insanity. The prodigal son had played the madman, for sin is madness of the worst kind. He had been demented, he had put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter, darkness for light, and light for darkness; he had injured himself, and had done for his soul what those possessed of devils in our Savior’s time did for their bodies, when they wounded themselves with stones, and cut themselves with knives. The insane man does not know himself to be insane, but as soon as he comes to himself he painfully perceives the state from which he is escaping. Returning then to true reason and sound judgment, the prodigal came to himself. Another illustration of the word may be found in the old world fables of enchantment—when a man was released from the magician’s spell he “came to himself.” Classic story has its legend of Circe, the enchantress, who transformed men into swine; surely this young man in our parable had been degraded in the same manner; he had lowered his manhood to the level of the brutes. It should be the property of man to have love to his kindred, to have respect for right, to have some care for his own interest. This young man had lost all these proper attributes of humanity, and so had become as the beast that perish. But as the poet sings of Ulysses, that he compelled the enchantress to restore his companions to their original form, so we see here the prodigal returning to manhood, looking away from his sensual pleasures, and commencing a course of conduct more consistent with his birth and parentage. There are men here today, perhaps, who are still in this swoon. O God of heaven awaken them! There may be some here who are morally insane; may the Lord recover them, the divine Physician put His cooling hand upon their fevered brow, and say to them—“I will; be you made whole.” Perhaps there are others here who have allowed their animal nature to reign supreme; may He who destroys the works of the devil deliver them from the power of Satan, and give them power to become the sons of God. He shall have all the glory!

It appears that when the prodigal came to himself, he was shut up to two thoughts; two facts were clear to him—there was plenty in his father’s house, and that he himself was famishing. May the two kindred spiritual facts have absolute power over all your hearts, if you are yet unsaved, for they are most certainly all-important and pressing truths of God! These are no fancies of one in a dream; no ravings of a maniac; no imaginations of one under fascination—it is most true that there is plenty of all good things in the Father’s house, and that the sinner needs them. Nowhere else can divine grace be found or God’s pardon gained; with God there is plenitude of mercy, let none venture to dispute this glorious truth. Equally true is it that the sinner without God is perishing; he is perishing now; he will perish everlastingly; all that is worth having in his existence will be utterly destroyed, and he shall only remain as a desolation. The owl and the bittern of misery and anguish shall haunt the ruins of his nature forever and ever. If we could shut up unconverted men to those two thoughts, what hopeful congregations we would have! Alas, they forget that there is mercy only with God, and fancy that it is to be found somewhere else; and they try to slip away from the humbling fact of their own lost estate, and imagine that perhaps there may be some back door of escape; they imagine that after all, they are not as bad as the Scripture declares, or that perhaps it shall be right with them at the last, however wrong it may be with them now! Alas, my

brothers and sisters, what shall we do with those who willfully shut their eyes to truths of which the evidence is overwhelming, and the importance overpowering? I earnestly entreat those of you who know how to approach the throne of God in faith to breathe the prayer that He would now bring into captivity the unconverted heart, and put these two strong fetters upon every unregenerate soul. There is abundant grace with God—there is utter destitution with them; bound with such fetters, and led into the presence of Jesus, the captive would soon receive the liberty of the children of God!

I intend only to mainly dwell this morning upon the first thought, the master thought as it seems to me, which was in the prodigal’s mind—that which really compelled him to say, “I will arise and go to my father.” It was not, I think, the home-bringing thought that he was perishing with hunger, but the impulse towards his father found its mainspring in the consideration, “How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare”; the plenty, the abundance, the superabundance of the father’s house was that which attracted him to return home. And many, many a soul has been led to seek God when it has fully believed that there was abundant mercy with Him. My desire this morning shall be to put plainly before every sinner here the exceeding abundance of the grace of God in Christ Jesus—hoping that the Lord will find out those who are His sons, and that they may catch at these words, and as they hear of the abundance of the bread in the Father’s house, may say, “I will arise and go to my Father.”

I. First, then, let us consider for a short time THE MORE THAN ABUNDANCE OF ALL GOOD THINGS IN THE FATHER’S HOUSE. What do you need this morning, awakened sinner? Of all that you need, there is with God, an all-sufficient, a superabounding supply—“bread enough and to spare.” Let us prove this to you. First, consider the Father Himself. Whoever shall rightly consider the Father will at once perceive that there can be no stint to mercy, no boundary to the possibilities of divine grace. What is the nature and character of the Supreme? “Is He harsh, or loving?” asks one. The Scripture answers the question, not by telling us that God loves, but by assuring us that God is love! God Himself is LOVE! It is His very essence; it is not that love is *in* God, but that God *is* love. Can there be a more concise and more positive way of saying that the love of God is infinite? You cannot measure God; your conceptions cannot grasp the grandeur of His attributes. Neither can you tell the dimensions of His love, nor conceive the fullness of it. Only understand this; that high as the heavens are above the earth, so are His ways higher than your ways—and His thoughts than your thoughts. His mercy endures forever; He pardons iniquity, and passes by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage; He retains not His Anger forever because He delights in mercy. “You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive: and plenteous in mercy unto all them who call upon You.” “Your mercy is great above the heavens.” “The Lord is full of pity, and of tender mercy.”

If divine love alone should not seem sufficient for your salvation, remember that with the Father to whom the sinner returns, there is as much of wisdom as there is of grace. Is your case a very difficult one? He who made you can heal you! Are your diseases strange and complex? He who fashioned the ear, can He not remove its deafness? He who made the eye, can He not enlighten it if it is blind? No mischief can have happened to you but what He, who is your God, can recover you from it. Matchless wisdom cannot fail to meet the intricacies of your case.

Neither can there be any failure of power with the Father. Do you not know that He who made the earth, and stretched out the heavens like a tent to dwell in, has no boundary to His strength, or limit to His might? If you need omnipotence to lift you up from the slough into which you have fallen, omnipotence is ready to deliver you—if you cry to the strong for strength! Though you should need all the force with which the Creator made the worlds, and all the strength with which He bears up the pillars of the universe—all that strength and force will be laid out for your good, if you believingly seek His mercy at the hand of God in Christ Jesus. None of His power shall be against you; none of His wisdom shall plan your overthrow, but His love shall reign in all, and every attribute of God shall become subservient to your salvation! Oh, when I think of sin, I cannot understand how a sinner can be saved; but when I think of God, and look into His heart, I understand how readily He can forgive. “Look into His heart,” asks one? “How can we do that?” Has He not laid bare His heart to you? Do you inquire where He has done this? I answer, yonder upon Calvary’s cross! What was in the very center of the divine heart? What, but the person of the Well-Beloved, His only-begotten Son? And He has taken His only-begotten and nailed Him to the cross, because if I may venture so to speak, He loved sinners better than His Son; He spared not His Son, but He spares the sinner! He poured out His wrath upon His Son, and made Him the substi-

tute for sinners, that He might lavish love upon the guilty who deserved His anger. O soul, if you are lost it is not from any want of divine grace, or wisdom, or power in the Father; if you perish, it is not because God is hard to move or unable to save! If you are a castaway, it is not because the eternal refused to hear your cries for pardon, or rejected your faith in Him! On your own head is your blood if your soul is lost! If you starve, you starve because you will starve, for in the Father's house there is “bread enough and to spare.”

But, now, consider a second matter which may set this more clearly before us. Think of *the Son of God*, who is, indeed, the true bread of life for sinners. Sinner, I return to my personal address; you need a Savior, and you may well be encouraged when you see that a Savior is provided—provided by God, since it is certain He would not make a mistake in the provision. But consider who the Savior is! He is Himself, God! Jesus who came from heaven for our redemption was not an angel; else might we tremble to trust the weight of our sin upon Him! He was not mere man, or He could but have suffered as a substitute for *one*, if indeed for one; but He was very God of very God—in the beginning with the Father! And does such a one come to redeem? Is there room to doubt as to His ability, if that is the fact? I do confess this day that if my sins were 10,000 times heavier than they are, yes, and if I had all the sins of this crowd in addition piled upon me, I could trust Jesus with them all at this moment now that I know Him to be the Christ of God! He is the mighty God, and by His pierced hands the burden of our sins is easily removed. He blots out our sins; He casts them into the depths of the sea!

And think of what Jesus, the Son of God, has done. He who was God, and thus blessed forever, left the throne and royalties of heaven, and stooped to yonder manger. There He lies; His mother wraps Him in swaddling clothes; He hangs upon her breast; the infinite is clothed as an infant! The invisible is made manifest in flesh! The Almighty is linked with weakness for our sakes! Oh, matchless stoop of condescension! If the Redeemer God does this in order to save us, shall it be thought a thing impossible for Him to save the vilest of the vile? Can anything be too difficult for Him who comes from heaven to earth to redeem?

Pause not because of astonishment, but press onward! Do you see Him, who was God over all, blessed forever, living more than 30 years in the midst of the sons of men, bearing the infirmities of manhood, taking upon Himself our sicknesses, and sharing our sorrows—His feet weary with treading the acres of Palestine? Look at His body faint oftentimes with hunger, and thirst, and labor; His knees knit to the earth with midnight prayer; His eyes red with weeping (for oftentimes Jesus wept), tempted in all points like as we are! Matchless spectacle! An incarnate God dwells among sinners, and endures their contradiction! What glory flashed forth ever and anon from the midst of His lowliness; a glory which should render faith in Him inevitable. You who walked on the sea; You who did raise the dead; it is not rational to doubt Your power to forgive sins! Did You not put it so when You bade the man take up his bed and walk? “Which is easier to say, Your sins are forgiven you, or to say, Rise up and walk?” Assuredly He is able to save to the uttermost them who come to God by Him; He was able even here on earth in weakness to forgive sins—much more now that He is seated in His glory! He is exalted on high to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins.

But, ah, the master proof that in Christ Jesus there is “bread enough and to spare,” is the cross. Will you follow me a moment? Will you follow HIM, rather, to Gethsemane? Can you see the bloody sweat as it falls upon the ground in His agony? Can you think of His scourging before Herod and Pilate? Can you trace Him along the *Via Dolorosa* of Jerusalem? Will your tender hearts endure to see Him nailed to the tree, and lifted up to bleed and die? This is but the shell; as for the inward kernel of His sufferings no language can describe it, neither can conception peer into it. The *everlasting God* laid *sin* on Christ, and where the sin was laid, there fell His wrath. “It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief.” Now He who died upon the cross was God's only-begotten Son. Can you conceive a limit to the merit of such a Savior's death? I know there are some who think it necessary to their system of theology to limit the merit of the blood of Jesus—if my system of theology needed such a limitation, I would cast it to the winds! I cannot, I dare not allow the thought to find lodging in my mind, it seems so near akin to blasphemy. In Christ's finished work I see an ocean of merit—my plummet finds no bottom—my eyes discover no shore. There must be sufficient efficacy in the blood of Christ, if God had so willed it, to have saved not only this entire world, but 10,000 worlds, had they transgressed the Maker's law. Once admit infinity into the matter, and *limit* is out of the question! Having a divine person for an offering—it is not consistent to conceive of *limited* value; boundaries and measure are terms inapplicable to

the divine sacrifice. The *intent of the divine purpose* fixes the application of the infinite offering, but does not change it into a finite work. In the atonement of Christ Jesus there is “bread enough and to spare.” Even as Paul wrote to Timothy, “He is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.”

But now let me lead you to another point of solemnly joyful consideration, and that is *the Holy Spirit*. To believe and love the Trinity is to possess the key of theology; we spoke of the Father, we spoke of the Son; let us now speak of the Holy Spirit. We do Him all too little honor, for the Holy Spirit condescends to come to earth and *dwell in our hearts!* And notwithstanding all our provocations He still abides within His people. Now, sinner, you need a New life, and you need holiness, for both of these are necessary to make you fit for heaven. Is there a provision for this? The Holy Spirit is provided and given in the covenant of grace, and surely in Him there is “enough and to spare.” What cannot the Holy Spirit do? Being divine, nothing can be beyond His power; look at what He has already done; He moved upon the face of chaos, and brought it into order. All the beauty of creation arose beneath His molding breath. We ourselves must confess with Elijah, “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty has given me life.” Think of the great deeds of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost when unlearned men spoke with tongues of which they knew not a syllable! And the flames of fire upon them were also *within* them, so that their hearts burned with zeal and courage to which they, up to then, had been strangers. Think of the Holy Spirit’s work on such a one as Saul of Tarsus; that persecutor foams blood—he is a very wolf! He would devour the saints of God at Damascus, and yet, within a few moments, you hear him say, “Who are You, Lord?” and yet again, “Lord, what will you have me to do?” His heart is changed; the Spirit of God has newly created it; the granite is melted in a moment into wax. Many of us stand before you as the living monuments of what the Holy Spirit can do, and we can assure you from our own experience, that there is no inward evil which He cannot overcome, no lustful desire of the flesh which He cannot subdue, no stubbornness of the affections which He cannot melt! Is anything too hard for the Lord? Is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? Surely no sinner can be beyond the possibilities of mercy when the Holy Spirit condescends to be the agent of human conversion! O sinner, if you perish, it is not because the Holy Spirit lacks power, or the blood of Jesus lacks efficacy, or the Father fails in love; it is because you believe not in Christ, but do abide in willful rebellion, refusing the abundant bread of life which is placed before you!

A few rapid sentences upon other things, which will go to show still further the greatness of the provision of divine mercy. Observe well that *throughout all the ages God has been sending one prophet after another* and these prophets have been succeeded by apostles; and these by martyrs and confessors, and pastors and evangelists, and teachers. All these have been commissioned by the Lord in regular succession, and what has been the message they have had to deliver? They have all pointed to Christ, the great Deliverer! Moses and the prophets all spoke of Him, and so have all truly God-sent ambassadors. Do you think, sinner, that God has made all this fuss about a trifle? Has He sent all these servants to call you to a table insufficiently furnished? Has He multiplied His invitations through so long a time to bid you and others come to a provision which is not after all sufficient for you? Oh, it cannot be! God is not mocked! Neither does He mock poor needy souls; the stores of His mercy are sufficient for the utmost emergencies—

*“Rivers of love and mercy here
In a rich ocean join!
Salvation in abundance flows,
Like floods of milk and wine!
Great God, the treasures of Your love
Are everlasting mines,
Deep as our helpless miseries are,
And boundless as our sins.”*

Recollect again that *God has been pleased to stake His honor upon the gospel.* Men desire a name, and God also is jealous of His glory. Now what has God been pleased to select for His name? Is it not the conversion and salvation of men? When instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree, and instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off! And do you think God will get a name by saving little sinners by a little Savior? Ah, His great name comes from washing out stains as black as hell, and pardoning sinners who were foulest of the foul. Is there one monstrous rebel here who is qualified to glorify God greatly because his salvation will be the wonder of angels and the amazement of devils? I hope there is. O you most degraded,

black, loathsome sinner nearest to being a damned sinner—if this voice can reach you, I challenge you to come and prove whether God’s mercy is not a match for your sins! You Goliath sinners, come here! You shall find that God can slay your enmity, and make you yet His friend, and even more, His loving and adoring servant, because great forgiveness shall secure great love. Such is the greatness of divine mercy, that “where sin abounded, grace does much more abound.”

Do you think, again, O sinner, that Jesus Christ came out of heaven to do a little deed, and to provide a slender store of mercy? Do you think He went up to Calvary, and down to the grave, and all, that He might do a common thing, and provide a stinted, narrow, limited salvation, such as your unbelief would imagine His redemption to be? No! We speak of the labors of Hercules—those are child’s play compared with the labors of Christ who slew the lion of hell! He turned purifying streams through the Augean stables of man’s sin, and cleansed them, and performed 10,000 miracles besides! And will you so depreciate Christ as to imagine that what He has accomplished is after all little, so little that it is not enough to save *you*? If it were in my power to single out the man who has been the most dishonest, most licentious, most drunken, most profane: in three words, most earthly, sensual, devilish, I would repeat the challenge which I gave just now, and bid him draw near to Jesus, and see whether the fountain filled with Christ’s atoning blood cannot wash him white! I challenge him at this instant to come and cast himself at the dear Redeemer’s feet, and see if Jesus will say, “I cannot save you; you have sinned beyond My power.” It shall never, never be; He is able to save to the uttermost; He is a Savior, and a great one! Christ will be honored by the grandeur of the grace which He bestows upon the greatest of offenders. There is in Him divine pardon “enough and to spare.”

I must leave this point, but I cannot do so without adding that I think “BREAD ENOUGH AND TO SPARE” might be taken for the motto of the gospel. I believe in particular redemption that Christ laid down His life for *His sheep*. But, as I have already said, *I do not believe in the limited value of that redemption*—how else could I dare to read the words of John, “He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sine of the whole world”? There is a sure portion for His elect, but there is also over and above “to spare.” I believe in the electing love which will save all its objects—“bread enough.” But I believe in boundless benevolence, “Bread enough *and to spare*.” We, when we have a purpose to accomplish, put forth the requisite quantity of strength and no more, for we must be economical; we must not waste our limited store; even charity gives the poor man no more than he absolutely needs. But when God feeds the multitude, He spreads the board with imperial bounty. Our water cart runs up and down the favored road, but when heaven’s clouds would favor the good man’s fields, they deluge whole nations, and even pour themselves upon the sea. There is no real waste with God; but at the same time there is no stint. “BREAD ENOUGH AND TO SPARE”—write that inscription over the house of mercy, and let every hungry passerby be encouraged to enter in and eat.

II. We must now pass on to a second consideration, and dwell very briefly on it. According to the text, there was not only bread enough in the house, but THE LOWEST IN THE FATHER’S HOUSE ENJOYED ENOUGH AND TO SPARE.

We can never make a parable run on all fours; therefore we cannot find the exact counterpart of the “hired servants.” I understand the prodigal to have meant this, that the very lowest menial servant employed by his father had bread to eat, and had “bread enough and to spare.” Now, how should we translate this? Why, sinner, the very lowest creature that God has made, that has not sinned against Him, is well supplied and has abounding happiness! There are adaptations for pleasure in the organizations of the lowest animals; see how the gnats dance in the summer’s sunbeam; hear the swallows as they scream with delight when on the wing. He who cares for birds and insects will surely care for men! God who hears the ravens when they cry, will He not hear the returning penitent? He gives these insects happiness—did He mean *me* to be wretched? Surely He who opens His hands, and supplies the need of every living thing will not refuse to open His hands, and supply my needs if I seek His face.

Yet I must not make these lowest creatures to be the hired servants; whom shall I then select among men? I will put it thus—the very worst of sinners that have come to Christ have found grace “enough and to spare”; and the very least of saints who dwell in the house of the Lord find love “enough and to spare.” Take then the guiltiest sinners, and see how bountifully the Lord treats them when they turn to Him. Did not some of you, who are yourselves unconverted, once know persons who were at least as bad, perhaps more outwardly immoral than yourselves? Well, they have been converted, though you have not, and when they were converted, what was their testimony? Did the blood of Christ avail to

cleanse them? Oh, yes, and more than cleanse them—for it added to them beauty not their own. They were naked once—was Jesus able to clothe them? Was there a sufficient covering in His righteousness? Ah, yes! They received not bare apparel, but royal raiment! You have seen others thus liberally treated—does not this induce you to come? Some of us need not confine our remarks to others, for we can speak personally of ourselves; we came to Jesus as full of sin as ever you can be, and felt ourselves beyond measure lost and ruined. But, oh, His tender love! I could sooner stand here and weep than speak to you of it; my soul melts in gratitude when I think of the infinite mercy of God to me in that hour when I came seeking mercy at His hands. Oh, why will you not come? May His Holy Spirit sweetly draw you! I proved that there was bread enough, mercy enough, forgiveness enough, and to spare. Come along, come along, poor guilty one! Come along, there is room enough for you!

Now, if the chief of sinners bears this witness, so do *the most obscure of saints*. If we could call forth from his seat a weak believer in God, one who is almost unknown in the church, one who sometimes questions whether he is a child of God, and he would be willing to be a hired servant as long as he might belong to God; and if I were to ask him, “How, after all, how has the Lord dealt with you?” What would be his reply? You have many afflictions, doubts and fears, but have you any complaints against your Lord? When you have waited upon Him for daily grace, has He denied you? When you have been full of troubles, has He refused you comfort? When you have been plunged in distress, has He declined to deliver you? The Lord Himself asks, “Have I been a wilderness unto Israel?” Testify against the Lord, you His people, if you have anything against Him! Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, whoever there is in God’s service who has found Him a hard taskmaster, let him speak! Among the angels before Jehovah’s throne, and among men redeemed on earth—if there is anyone who can say he has been dealt with unjustly, or treated with ungenerous churlishness, let him lift up his voice! But there is not one! Even the devil himself, when he spoke of God and of His servant Job, said, “Does Job serve God for nothing?” Of course he did not—God will not let His servants serve Him for nothing! He will pay them superabundant wages, and they shall all bear witness that at His table there is “bread enough and to spare.” Now, if these still enjoy the bread of the Father’s house, these who were once great sinners, these who are now only very commonplace saints, surely, sinner, it should encourage you to say, “I will arise and go to my Father,” for His hired servants “have bread enough and to spare.”

III. Notice in the third place, that the text dwells upon THE MULTITUDE OF THOSE WHO HAVE “BREAD ENOUGH AND TO SPARE.” The prodigal lays an emphasis upon those words, “*How many* hired servants of my father’s.” He was thinking of their great number, and counting them over, he thought of those who tended the cattle, of those who went out with the camels, of those who watched the sheep, those who minded the crops, and those who served in the house. He ran them over in his mind—his father was great in the land, and had many servants; yet he knew that they all had of the best food “enough and to spare.” “Why should I perish with hunger? I am only one at any rate. Though my hunger seems insatiable, it is but one belly that has to be filled, and lo, my father fills hundreds, *thousands* every day! Why should I perish with hunger?” Now, O you awakened sinner, you who feel your sin and misery this morning, think of the numbers upon whom God has bestowed His grace already; think of the countless hosts in heaven; if you were introduced there today, you would find it as easy to count the stars, or the sands of the sea, as to count the multitudes that are before the throne even now!

They have come from the east, and from the west, and they are sitting down with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob—and there is room enough for you! And beside those in heaven, think of those on earth; blessed be God, His elect on earth are to be counted by the millions, I believe, and the days are coming—brighter days than these—when there shall be multitudes upon multitudes brought to know the Savior, and to rejoice in Him! The Father’s love is not for a few only, but for an exceedingly great company—a number that no man can number will be found in heaven! Now, a man can number a very great amount. Set to work your Newtons, your calculators—they can count great numbers, but God, and God alone, can count the multitude of His redeemed. Now, sinner, you are but one at any rate, great sinner as you are, and the mercy of God which embraces millions must have room enough in it for *you*! The sea which holds the whales and innumerable creeping things—do you say, “It will overflow its banks if I bathe in it”? The sun that floods the universe with light, can you say, “I should exhaust his beams if I should ask him to enlighten my darkness”? Say not so! If you come to yourself you will not tolerate

such a thought, but you will remember with hope the richness of the Father’s divine grace, even though your own poverty stares you in the face.

Let us add a few words to close with—close grappling words to some of you to whom God has sent His message this morning, and whom He intends to save. O you who have been long hearers of the gospel, and who know it well in theory, but have felt none of the power of it in your hearts—let me now remind you where and what you are! You are perishing! As the Lord lives, there is but a step between you and death! But a step, no, but a *breath* between you and hell! Sinner, if at this moment your heart should cease its beating, and there are a thousand causes that might produce that result before the clock ticks again—you would be in the flames of divine wrath! Can you bear to be in such peril? If you were hanging over a rock by a slender thread which must soon break, and if you would then fall headlong down a terrible precipice, you would not sleep, but be full of alarm. May you have sense enough, wit enough, and divine grace enough, to be alarmed until you escape from the wrath to come!

Remember, however, that while you are perishing, you are perishing in sight of plenty! You are famishing where a table is abundantly spread! What is more, there are those whom you know now sitting at that table and feasting! What sad perversity for a man to persist in being starved in the midst of a banquet where others are being satisfied with good things!

But I think I hear you say, “I fear I have no right to come to Jesus.” I will ask you this—have you any right to say that till you have been denied? Did you ever try to go to Christ? Has He ever rejected you? If then you have never received a denial, why do you wickedly imagine that He would deny you? Wickedly, I say, for it is an offense against the Christ who opened His heart upon the cross to imagine that He could deny a penitent! Have you any right to say, “But I am not one of those for whom His mercy is provided”? Who told you so? Have you climbed to heaven and read the secret records of God’s election? Has the Lord revealed a strange decree to you, and said, “Go and despair, I will have no pity on you”? If you say that God has so spoken, I do not believe you! In this sacred book is recorded what God has said; here is the sure word of testimony, and in it I find it said of no humble seeker that God has shut him out from His grace. Why have you a right to invent such a fiction in order to secure your own damnation? Instead, there is much in the Word of God and elsewhere to encourage you in coming to Christ; He has not yet repelled one sinner! That is good to begin with—it is not likely that He would, for since He died to save sinners, why should He reject them when they seek to be saved? You say, “I am afraid to come to Christ.” Is that wise? I have heard of a poor navigator who had been converted to Christ, who had but little education, but who knew the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and when dying, very cheerfully and joyfully longed to depart. His wife said to him, “But, mon, ain’t you afeared to stand before the judge?” “Woman,” said he, “Why should I be afeared of a man as died for me?” Oh, why should you be afraid of Christ who died for sinners? The idea of being afraid of Him should be banished by the fact that He shed His blood for the guilty! You have much reason to believe from the very fact that He died, that He will receive you! Besides, you have His word for it, for He says, “Him who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out”—for no reason, and in no way, and on no occasion, and under no presence, and for no motive! “I will not cast him out,” says the original. “Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out.” You say it is too good to be true that there can be pardon for you—this is a foolish measuring of God’s corn with your bushel! Because it seems too good a thing for you to receive, do you fancy it is too good for God to bestow? Let the greatness of the good news be one reason for believing that the news is true, for it is so like God—

“Who is a pardoning God like Thee?

Or who has grace so rich and free?”

Because the gospel assures us that He forgives great sins through a great Savior, it looks as if it were true since He is so great a God.

What should be the result of all this with every sinner here at this time? I think this good news should awaken those who have almost gone to sleep through despair. The sailors have been pumping the vessel, the leaks are gaining, she is going down; the captain is persuaded she must be a wreck. Depressed by such evil tidings, the men refuse to work, and since the boats all have holes in them, and they cannot make a raft, they sit down in despair. Presently the captain has better news for them. “She will float,” he says, “The wind is abating, the pumps are working well, the leak can yet be reached.” See how they work—with what cheery courage they toil on, because there is hope! Soul, there is hope! *There is hope! THERE IS HOPE!* To the harlot, to the thief, to the drunkard, there is hope!

“There is no hope,” says Satan. Liar that you are, get back to your den—for YOU there is no hope! But for fallen man, though he is in the mire of sin up to his very neck; though he is at the gates of death—while he lives there is hope! There is hope for hopeless souls in the Savior!

In addition to awakening us, this ought to elevate the sinner’s thoughts. Some years ago there was a crossing-sweeper in Dublin with his broom, at the corner, and in all probability his highest thoughts were to keep the crossing clean, and look for dropped coins. One day a lawyer put his hand upon his shoulder, and said to him, “My good fellow, do you know that you are heir to a fortune of £10,000 a year?” “Do you mean it?” said he. “I do,” he said. “I have just received the information, and I am sure you are the man.” The sweeper walked away, *and he forgot his broom!* Are you astonished? Why, who would not have forgotten a broom when suddenly made possessor of £10,000 a year? So I pray that some poor sinners who have been thinking of the pleasures of the world, when they hear that there is hope, and that there is heaven to be had, will forget the deceitful pleasures of sin, and follow after higher and better things!

Should it not also purify the mind? The prodigal, when he said, “I will arise and go to my father,” became, in a measure, reformed from that very moment. How, you ask? Why, he left the swine trough! More, he left the wine cup, and he left the harlots; he did not go with the harlot on his arm, and the wine cup in his hand, and say, “I will take these with me, and go to my father.” It could not be; these were all left, and though he had no goodness to bring, yet he did not try to keep his sins and come to Christ. I shall close with this remark, because it will act as a sort of *caveat*, and be a fit word to season the wide invitations of the free gospel. Some of you, I fear, will make mischief even out of the gospel, and will dare to take the cross and use it for a gallows for your souls. If God is so merciful, you will go, therefore, and sin the more, and because divine grace is freely given, therefore you will continue in sin, that grace may abound. If you do this, I would solemnly remind you I have no grace to preach to such as you; “Your damnation is just”; it is the word of inspiration, and the only one I know that is applicable to such as you are! But every needy, guilty soul that desires a Savior is told today to believe in Jesus, that is, trust in the substitution and sacrifice of Christ. Trust Him to take your sin and blot it out; trust Him to take your soul and save it; trust Christ entirely, and you are forgiven this very moment! You are saved this very instant, and you may rejoice now in the fact that being justified by faith, you have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord! O come! Come! Come! Come and welcome! Come now to the Redeemer’s blood! Holy Spirit, compel them to come in, that the house of mercy may be filled. Amen and Amen!

[THE reader, if a believer in Christ, is requested to unite with the preacher in praising the Lord for grace abundantly given in connection with these sermons. This is the thousandth of the series of sermon which we have published consecutively week by week, and of which the circulation has continued to increase. These discourses have many of them been reprinted in the United States, and have also been translated into German, French, Swedish, Dutch, Italian, and Welsh. Some of them have also been issued in the Hungarian, Russian, Danish, Spanish Telugu, Malagasay, Maori, and Gaelic tongues. Of their effect, by the blessing of God’s Spirit, thousands in heaven, and in all parts of the earth, are joyful witnesses. If we did not praise God for such mercy, the stones would cry out! 1871.]

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